

CLAIMS:

1 1. A computer program product for filling orders for items, the items
2 being supplied from one or more fulfillment centres or from suppliers enrolled in one
3 or more electronic marketplaces, the computer program product comprising a
4 computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied
5 in said medium, and comprising:

6 computer readable program code means for implementing a set of fulfillment
7 centre objects for representing the one or more fulfillment centres and
8 the one or more electronic marketplaces, comprising

9 a first subset of the fulfillment centre objects being defined for representing
10 corresponding fulfillment centres, and

11 a second subset of the fulfillment centre objects being defined for representing
12 corresponding electronic marketplaces,

13 computer readable program code means for implementing a release to
14 fulfillment object for associating one or more items in an order with
15 one of the set of fulfillment centre objects,

16 computer readable program code means for sending fulfillment instructions
17 relating to one or more items associated with one of the first subset of
18 fulfillment centre objects to the corresponding fulfillment centre, and

19 computer readable program code means for sending ordering information
20 relating to one or more items associated with one of the second subset
21 of fulfillment centre objects to the corresponding electronic
22 marketplace.

1 2. The computer program product of claim 1, in which a release to
2 fulfillment object associated with a selected one of the fulfillment centre objects in
3 the second subset comprise data representations for tracking orders in the electronic
4 marketplace corresponding to the selected fulfillment centre object.

1 3. The computer program product of claim 1, in which each fulfillment
2 centre object comprises data representations for representing inventory and/or
3 fulfillment centre priority.

1 4. The computer program product of claim 3, in which the data
2 representations for representing inventory and/or fulfillment centre priority in the
3 second subset of fulfillment centre objects represents a null inventory and/or a low
4 fulfillment centre priority.

1 5. The computer program product of claim 3, further comprising
2 computer readable program code means for pre-selecting items for association with
3 one of the set of fulfillment centre objects based on inventory and/or fulfillment
4 centre priority.

1 6. The computer program product of claim 5, further comprising
2 computer readable program code means for implementing an administrator interface,
3 the administrator interface comprising means for confirming and over-riding the pre-
4 selection of items for association with one of the set of fulfillment centre objects.

1 7. The computer program product of claim 1 further comprising
2 computer readable program code means for grouping items and in which the program
3 code means for sending ordering information further comprises program code means
4 for maintaining the grouping of the items when information corresponding to the
5 grouped items is sent to the corresponding electronic marketplace.

1 8. The computer program product of claim 7 in which the program code
2 means for grouping items comprises program code means for grouping the items
3 corresponding to the order from which the items are received.

- 1 9. The computer program product of claim 7 in which the program code
- 2 means for grouping items comprises program code means for grouping the items
- 3 corresponding to an aggregation of items from a single order received.

1 10. An order management system for filling orders for items, the items
2 being supplied from one or more fulfillment centres or from suppliers enrolled in one
3 or more electronic marketplaces, the system comprising:

4 a set of representation means for representing the one or more fulfillment
5 centres and the one or more electronic marketplaces,

6 a first subset of the set of representation means for representing corresponding
7 fulfillment centres, and

8 a second subset of the set of representation means for representing
9 corresponding electronic marketplaces,

10 means for carrying out a release to fulfillment step for associating one or more
11 items in an order with one of the set of representation means,

12 means for sending information relating to one or more items associated with
13 one of first subset of representation means to the corresponding
14 fulfillment centre, and for sending information relating to one or more
15 items associated with one of the second subset of representation means
16 to the corresponding electronic marketplace.

1 11. The order management system of claim 10 in which a release to
2 fulfillment object associated with a selected one of the fulfillment centre objects in
3 the second subset comprise data representations for tracking orders in the electronic
4 marketplace corresponding to the selected fulfillment centre object.

1 12. The order management system of claim 10 in which each
2 representation means comprises means for representing inventory and/or fulfillment
3 centre priority.

1 13. The order management system of claim 12 in which each
2 representation means for representing inventory and/or fulfillment centre priority in

3 the second subset of representation means represents a null inventory and/or a low
4 fulfillment centre priority.

1 14. The order management system of claim 12 further comprising means
2 for pre-selecting items for association with one of the set of representation means
3 based on inventory and/or fulfillment centre priority.

1 15. The order management system of claim 14 further comprising an
2 administrator interface comprising means for confirming and over-riding the pre-
3 selection of items for association with one of the set of representation means.

1 16. The order management system of claim 10 further comprising means
2 for grouping items and in which the means for sending information further comprises
3 means for maintaining the grouping of the items when information corresponding to
4 the grouped items is sent to the corresponding electronic marketplace.

1 17. The order management system of claim 16 in which the means for
2 grouping items comprises means for grouping the items corresponding to the order
3 from which the items were received by the order management system.

1 18. The order management system of claim 16 in which the means for
2 grouping items comprises means for grouping the items corresponding to an
3 aggregation of items from a single order received by the order management system.

1 19. A computer-implemented method for filling orders for items using an
2 order management system,
3 the items being supplied from one or more fulfillment centres or from
4 suppliers enrolled in one or more electronic marketplaces,
5 the order management system comprising a set of fulfillment centre objects
6 for representing the one or more fulfillment centres and the one or
7 more electronic marketplaces, comprising
8 a first subset of the fulfillment centre objects being defined for representing
9 corresponding fulfillment centres, and
10 a second subset of the fulfillment centre objects being defined for representing
11 corresponding electronic marketplaces,
12 the method comprising the steps of:
13 associating one or more items in an order with one of the set of fulfillment
14 centre objects using a release to fulfillment object,
15 sending fulfillment instructions relating to one or more items associated with
16 one of the first subset of fulfillment centre objects to the corresponding
17 fulfillment centre, and
18 sending ordering information relating to one or more items associated with
19 one of the second subset of fulfillment centre objects to the
20 corresponding electronic marketplace.

1 20. The method of claim 19, in which a release to fulfillment object
2 associated with a selected one of the fulfillment centre objects in the second subset
3 comprise data representations for tracking orders in the electronic marketplace
4 corresponding to the selected fulfillment centre object.

1 21. The method of claim 19, in which each fulfillment centre objects
2 comprises means for representing inventory and/or fulfillment centre priority.

1 22. The method of claim 21, in which the means for representing
2 inventory and/or fulfillment centre priority in the second subset of fulfillment centre
3 objects represents a null inventory and/or a low fulfillment centre priority.

1 23. The method of claim 21, further comprising the step of pre-selecting
2 items for association with one of the set of fulfillment centre objects based on
3 inventory and/or fulfillment centre priority.

1 24. The method of claim 19, in which the order management system
2 comprises an administrator interface, and the method further comprises the step of an
3 administrator using the administrator interface to confirm or over-ride the pre-
4 selection of items for association with one of the set of fulfillment centre objects.

1 25. The method of claim 19, further comprising the step of grouping items
2 and in which the step of sending ordering information further comprises maintaining
3 the grouping of the items when information corresponding to the grouped items is
4 sent to the corresponding electronic marketplace.

1 26. The method of claim 25 in which the step of grouping items comprises
2 grouping the items corresponding to the order from which the items were received by
3 the order management system.

1 27. The order management system of claim 25 in which the step of
2 grouping items comprises grouping the items corresponding to an aggregation of
3 items from a single order received by the order management system.

1 28. In a computer program product for filling orders for items, the
2 computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having computer
3 readable program code means embodied in said medium for implementing a set of
4 fulfillment centre objects for representing one or more fulfillment centres, for

5 implementing a release to fulfillment object for associating one or more items in an
6 order with one of the set of fulfillment centre objects and for sending fulfillment
7 instructions relating to one or more items associated with one of the first subset of
8 fulfillment centre objects to the corresponding fulfillment centre,

9 further computer readable program code means embodied in said medium for
10 representing one or more electronic marketplaces as fulfillment centre
11 objects whereby fulfillment instructions relating to items associated
12 with the said fulfillment centre objects representing electronic
13 marketplaces are directed to the represented electronic marketplaces.